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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: PRC/HAMAS: UPDATE FROM DDG CHEN XIAODONG

REF: A. BEIJING 09397

[1](#)B. BEIJING 06531

[1](#)C. BEIJING 06347

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Daniel Shields. Reasons 1.
4 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (C) MFA West Asian and North African Affairs Department Deputy Director General Chen Xiaodong called in Polmincouns on May 26 to provide an update on plans for Hamas Foreign Minister Mahmoud Al-Zahhar to participate (Ref A) in the meeting of the Sino-Arab Cooperation Forum to be held in Beijing May 31 - June 1. Chen stressed the multilateral character of the event, emphasizing Al-Zahhar will not be making a bilateral visit to the PRC or holding bilateral meetings with PRC officials.

[1](#)2. (C) China will make use of informal opportunities on the margins of the forum, such as coffee breaks, to urge Hamas to accept the three conditions for the resumption of assistance set by the United States-EU- Russia-UN Quartet and embraced by the international community: for Hamas to give up violence, acknowledge the State of Israel and accept previously signed agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Beijing will work to persuade Hamas to hold talks with Israel as soon as possible as part of the PRC's overall goal of pushing forward the Middle East Peace Process and promoting stability in the region, Chen stated.

[1](#)3. (C) Polmincouns, noting Hamas's well-known links to terrorism, told Chen that the United States does not want Al-Zahhar to visit China at all and does not want China to have bilateral contacts with him. Chen said no bilateral meetings will take place, but Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing will need, for protocol reasons, to have some contact with all the heads of delegation, including Al-Zahhar. The contact would probably be during a coffee break and the Chinese will avoid any arrangements that would suggest a bilateral meeting is taking place. Chen said the PRC position on Hamas has been consistent, pointing out that China had publicly and privately dismissed Al-Zahhar's unilateral announcement in April that he would visit China.

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